Impulses for action from the conference: “Shared Airspace – Towards a bird-friendly electricity grid”

The simultaneous and mutually reinforcing climate and biodiversity crises empahsise the urgent need for all relevant actors to consider and implement bird protection measures, especially in times of politically led planning acceleration of electricity grid expansion. In this context, barriers and solutions were discussed at the interdisciplinary conference “Shared Airspace” and summarised here in six impulses for action. These go hand in hand with the document “Future visions for bird protection in the electricity grid” (in German), which contains comprehensive explanations and proposed solutions for individual aspects.

1. Scientifically recognised, binding, nationwide standards should be established for both methods for retrofitting and new construction throughout entire power grid - especially for critical line areas.

2. Data should be collected according to standards (yet to be defined) and fed into a central, nationwide database. An open approach to existing and future project data is necessary to improve the state of knowledge.

3. A nationwide analysis of the risk-hotspots for birds in the power grid should be conducted on a regular basis, and a sensitivity map should be produced as a result to serve as a binding instrument for both new grid projects and the existing grid.

4. Interdisciplinary platforms and working groups are needed to share findings, build know-how, increase research transparency and close research gaps, e.g. on the topics of bird flight diverters & construction forms of grid infra-structure.

5. All relevant stakeholders should be involved in concrete grid expansion projects at an early stage and in an open-ended manner in order to reconcile the needs of bird protection with the technological possibilities.

6. Incentives and resources should made available so that all relevant actors have the capacity to focus on the topic of bird protection.

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